


[profile](#)
[bulletins](#)
[images](#)
[documents](#)
[Pol/SitReps](#)
[contacts](#)
[links](#)
[logout](#)
[profile](#)
[Navigate epa osc](#)


Paulsboro Train Derailment

Paulsboro, NJ - EPA Region II
NRC#: 1031908



Site Contact:

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East Jefferson Street
Paulsboro, NJ 08066
www.epaosc.org/paulsborotrainerailment
Latitude: 39.8345751
Longitude: -75.2368212

[KML](#) | [RSS](#) | [site map](#) | [area map](#) | [bookmark](#)

Bulletins

None for this site.

Images



[List All...](#)

Documents

[AreaRae VOC Readings
Dec 10, 2...](#)
[AreaRae VOC Readings
Dec 10, 2...](#)
[AreaRae VOC Readings
Dec 10, 2...](#)
[AreaRae VOC Readings
Dec 10, 2...](#)

[List All...](#)

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[POLREP - 18](#)
[POLREP - 17](#)
[POLREP - 16](#)

[List All...](#)

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[List All...](#)

Links

[News article from WCET
regardi...](#)
[Private web site to access
raw...](#)
[EPA Website for
Paulsboro Trai...](#)
[Public web site
established fo...](#)

[List All...](#)

At approximately 0700 EST on 30 November 2012, as many as seven Conrail freight cars transporting chemicals derailed and overturned after a rail bridge crossing Mantua Creek collapsed in Paulsboro, New Jersey. The incident occurred near the 200 block of East Jefferson Street, in Paulsboro, NJ. The Department of Transportation reported three cars fell into the creek. Conrail reported one of the tank cars is leaking an unknown amount of vinyl chloride into Mantua Creek. Onlookers also reported seeing a vapor cloud rise from the scene.

USCG and Gloucester County Emergency Response, including HAZMAT, are on scene and ordered residents to shelter-in-place. A half-mile radius evacuation zone was also issued for local residents. Paulsboro High School has been on lockdown since 0715 EST. Transportation Security Operation Center reports Conrail relayed 18 residents reporting possible effects from the spill and have been placed in a staging area for decontamination.

Vinyl chloride is an industrial chemical described as colorless gas with a sweet odor and known to be highly toxic, flammable and carcinogenic. It is primarily used in the production of PVC. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, short-term exposure to high levels of vinyl chloride in the air has resulted in central nervous system effects such as dizziness, drowsiness and headaches.

Mantua Creek is a stream in the Mantua Township in Gloucester County. It flows northwest for 18.6 miles to the Delaware River at Paulsboro across from the Philadelphia International Airport. The FAA reports airport operations are unaffected. Mantua Creek is approximately 150 feet wide at the location of the bridge collapse.

For additional information, visit the **Pollution/Situation Report** ([Pol/SitReps](#)) section.